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THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

THE APOTHEOSIS OF MIND IN MODERN IDEALISM.¹

THAT the gateway to a spiritual conception of the world lies through an analysis of its contents in mental terms is, perhaps in most forms of modern idealism, a conviction almost axiomatic. Idealistic philosophy has declared that the essence of the universe must first be described in terms of ideas before it can be appreciated in terms of ideals. This at any rate is the conviction behind the type of idealism made familiar by Bishop Berkeley. "Some truths there are," says this philosopher in a passage too famous to quote without apology, "so near and obvious to the mind that a man need only open his eyes to see them. Such I take this important one to be, viz., that all the choir of heaven and furniture of earth—in a word, all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world—have not any substance without the mind; that their being is to be perceived or known; that consequently, so long as they are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or in that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all or else subsist in the mind of some eternal spirit; it being perfectly unintelligible, and involving all the absurdity of abstraction, to attribute to any single part of them an existence independent of a spirit."² False, therefore, according to Berkeley and his followers, is the common dualism of mind and matter. If the common distinction between things and ideas connote a distinction in substance, then it must be rejected as gratuitous.

¹ A Fragment of a larger Essay.

² *Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*, Part I, Section VI.

For the real substance of the world is mental. Nothing exists but mind. Yet the distinction between things and ideas need not be abandoned—may we not speak with the vulgar provided we think with the learned?—if we mean by it nothing else than a difference between orders and degrees of ideas. Berkeley's doctrine, in short, is essentially monistic and must be understood in contrast with materialism, its polar opposite. Instead of reducing all things to matter in motion, Berkeley's form of idealism reverses the analysis and discovers everything to be composed of mental stuff.

My excuse for mentioning a doctrine so familiar is the fact that in Berkeley we have the prototype of those modern versions of idealism against which recent realism has inaugurated such a wholesome rebellion. The 'ego-centric predicament'—perhaps more properly designated as "ideo-centric"—re-echoed many times since Berkeley's classic formulation of it, has never found more pithy and yet more lucid an expression than in the dictum of *esse est percipi*. The general view that the world is identical with the ideas in terms of which its nature is experienced and recorded has, since Berkeley's defense of it, altered little in modes of analysis or in fashions of argument. Thus argues Mr. F. H. Bradley: "Find any piece of existence, take up anything that anyone could possibly call a fact, . . . and then judge if it does not consist in sentient experience. . . . When the experiment is made strictly, I can myself conceive of nothing else than the experienced. Anything, in no sense felt or perceived, becomes to me quite unmeaning . . . [therefore], I am driven to the conclusion that for me experience is the same as reality."¹ And a more recent and equally distinguished writer—the author of *A History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*—puts the case for Berkeleyism in this manner: "All knowledge, of whatever kind it may be, is contained for every individual person within the range of his own consciousness. The horizon of any person's mind contains everything that exists so far as he is concerned. There is nothing in the world for any of us but that which we in some way or other mentally

¹ *Appearance and Reality*, pp. 145, 146.

experience—such experience being of various kinds, such as Sensations, Perceptions, Ideas, Emotions, Desires, Volitions or Feelings in general. These all together in their existence within our consciousness form the only content of our knowledge, and outside of them there is for us no knowledge and no world.”¹ This, it will be conceded, is Berkeleyism with a vengeance. It is still the favorite cornerstone of many an idealistic edifice. And the confusion in motives which analysis may discern in Berkeley’s thinking is the same confusion which lies embedded in the minds of his zealous followers. To this confusion the following pages seek to direct attention.

Berkeley and those who adhere to his subjectivism seem to postulate an identity of meaning in the terms mental and spiritual. In the passage from Berkeley cited above, ‘mind’ and ‘spirit’ are used interchangeably as if they were synonymous. A spiritual conception of the world is assumed to follow directly from the demonstration that its constitution is mental. Once prove, so the assumption runs, that “all those bodies which compose the mighty frame of the world” require a ‘mind’ to describe and to account for its nature, then it can be established that God is in his heaven and all is right with the cosmos; that our universe, in fact, is the paragon of goodness, beauty, order, rationality; in short, of all those ideals and values epitomised under the word ‘spirituality.’ It is all so very, very simple. A world conceived as composed of material particles is regarded *ipso facto* as naked of spirituality; to show that it is spiritual one must begin by dissolving it into psychical dust.

It demands no great feat of philosophic imagination to challenge the presupposition that in order to regard the world as propitious to spiritual values one has, as a condition *sine quâ non*, to reduce it to mental categories. A world describable in the language of ‘mind’ may as such be hostile to the deepest and noblest aspirations of the ‘spirit.’ Empirical considerations alone suffice to show that many things which exemplify mental traits are often destructive of those features which we are wont to regard as spiritual. It requires observation little astute to view

¹ Merz, John Theodore, *A Fragment on the Human Mind*, pp. 39, 40.

as sordid and corrupt much of what constitutes our mental life. No human being, however normal, is a stranger to emotional and volitional experiences unspiritual in character and direction. We need but remind ourselves of the analysis of human nature characteristic of Southern Buddhism and of Pauline Christianity to appreciate the possible discrepancy between the mental and the spiritual. And it is easy to see that an interpretation of the world in terms of *certain* mental traits, those that seemed to Hobbes or to Kant constitutive of the mind of 'natural' man, would banish from it all those things which we associate with spirituality. There would be in such a world no goodness, no beauty, no holiness, no perfection, no order, no significance, no rationality, although it would still be possible to characterize it as mental. For stupidity is mental. And so is cruelty and hatred and anger and envy and jealousy and cowardice and covetousness and many other brutish tissues which form no inconsiderable portion of the fabric and texture of consciousness. To say then that the world is mental is to say nothing at all about its spirituality. To render it amenable to ideas is not to show its congruity with ideals. Quite the contrary: it is within speculative possibility to imagine a world through and through mental but revoltingly unspiritual, a world responsive to our ideas but at variance with our ideals. And it is precisely the recognition of this disparity, the antinomy between a world subject to our ideas and a world antagonistic to our ideals, which lends to pessimism — especially to the type represented by Schopenhauer — peculiar pertinency and potency.

So singularly instructive for our purpose is this type of pessimism that brief mention must here be made of it. For Schopenhauer's philosophy, being 'idealistic,' is a perennial challenge to the usual optimism which is supposed to follow from the recognition of mind as an ultimate category. The thesis that there is in the world nothing but mind is in Schopenhauer's doctrine as essential a part as it is, for example, in that of Berkeley. For him as for Berkeley the contents of experience cannot be rendered intelligible in terms other than those derived from mind. The range of the world must for each one of us coincide with

the range of experience. The substance of the universe is the substance of ideas; it exists to be felt, perceived, intuited, known, desired, repulsed, or otherwise appropriated by mind. Objectivity conceived as non-mental or extra-mental can have little meaning in a philosophy the starting point of which is the declaration: *Die Welt ist meine Vorstellung*. But the fact that the basis and the contents of the world must be sought in mind, that its locus and range must be explored within consciousness or experience, does not by itself confer upon it meaning, significance, dignity, rationality—in short, spirituality. The contrast of which Schopenhauer's philosophy is such a profound expression is the familiar contrast between 'existential' judgments and 'spiritual' judgments (so William James aptly translates what the Germans denominate as *Werturteile*). The existential facts themselves, whether they fall inside or outside the charmed circle of mind, do not carry within them certificates of spiritual value. The existential problem is one thing, the spiritual another. And it is of the essence of all pessimism, whether it exhibits itself in emotional or in rational dress, whether it shows itself in passionately temperamental or in intellectually impersonal vesture, to presuppose a radical disparity between existence and value. Indeed, this is pessimism—the poignant experience or the piercing conviction that actual existence is wanting in worth and that the values which the soul craves have in reality no abiding city. Such is the general form of all genuine pessimism, whether it is achieved through personal experience or disinterested analysis. Only in Schopenhauer—and this should give pause to those who confuse the mental with the spiritual—this fundamental opposition between existence and value is one which has at its root the idealistic presupposition that there is in the universe nothing but mind. Is it too paradoxical to say that Schopenhauer's is a pessimism which has for its basis the explicit recognition of a profound antinomy between 'mind' and 'spirit,' if mind be understood to connote a meaning mainly existential, and spirit a sense implying value? Mind, for Schopenhauer, is, in the last analysis, essentially unspiritual, that is, blind, foolish, capricious, cruel, sordid, and miserable.

It would not be necessary to insist so much upon the possibility of a genuine clash between a mental and a spiritual conception of the world were it not for the optimistic bias of traditional idealism, a bias which, to a large extent, is due to the confusion of mind with spirituality. In the case of Berkeley this confusion is quite transparent. To ward off the menace to a spiritual view of things, involved in materialism, Berkeley elaborates his doctrine of *esse est percipi* as a bulwark against atheism. God must be viewed under the form of mentality, such as our human perceptions exemplify, if he is to be conceived as the source and the guarantee of all that is spiritual. But a mosaic of sensations and perceptions—for such after all is structurally Berkeley's world—is this, one may ask, more congruous and commensurate with divinity than a galaxy of physical atoms? "It is not the stuff things are made of that concerns us," remarks Mr. Santayana, "but the things into which that stuff may be made. Therefore, a philosopher who constructs a world out of leaping, flickering, and self-devouring thoughts is a physical philosopher only, quite as much as if he constructed the world out of fire."¹ What is here said in disparagement of the post-Kantian idealists applies with much greater force to Berkeley, whose philosophy is a sort of inverted physics. Little skill in dialectic is required to show that Berkeley, in his substitution of a mental for a physical atomism, removes from materialism nothing more than its name. In the words of a recent writer: "So long as we take it simply as it stands, this changing of objects into ideas really changes little but their names, as Berkeley himself is willing enough upon occasion to maintain. . . . There is nothing distinctive in Berkeley until we can justify his hypothesis of a Deity. Short of that he changes the names of things, but no more. Now, it is when he is pressed for evidence in support of this, that Berkeley fails to satisfy Hume's more exacting standards of evidence."² Berkeley, continues the same author, could only reach his Deity "by doing precisely what he would not allow

¹ "The Two Idealisms" in *The International Quarterly*, Vol. VI, 1907, p. 24.

² J. W. Scott, *Syndicalism and Philosophical Realism*, pp. 63, 65.

the materialists to do, transcend the actual data of sense.”¹ And because realism is a predilection for the immediate and given, unwilling to transcend the data as found, Berkeley, so this critic avers, should be called not an idealist at all, but a realist. Another critic, Professor G. P. Adams, has the same objection in mind in characterizing Berkeley’s insight as “so utterly sweeping in its scope that it often seems to be only a re-naming of the total universe of knowable objects, considered wholesale and *en bloc*, and a relabelling which tells us nothing further about any of the specific items or relations which characterize the particular things within our world.”² Yet, what these critics fail to note is the fact that in all those who, like Berkeley, seek earnestly to substitute mind for matter as the substance of things, the conviction is irresistible that the mental as such, whatever its direction and goal, is deeper, more significant—more worthy, in short,—than its opposite. Spiritual values, so they believe, cannot be dissociated from mind. To exchange the material stuff of things for a fabric woven of different texture is to effect more than a change in name. It means for them a change in the ultimate destiny of the universe. Matter is, so they assume, impervious to spirituality; mind alone is consonant with it. Thus the bias of idealism may be expressed as a bias for mind as such. The existential judgments about mind are not merely existential. They are ultimately judgments of value. And because mind is held to be the region where existence and value coalesce, a mental atomism, such as Berkeley’s, tends at once to assume an optimistic coloring. For if pessimism consists in the antinomy between existential judgments and judgments of value, optimism means their intrinsic harmony. But to represent mind as the locus of their happy conjunction or coalescence involves a disregard of all those motives, which, in Schopenhauer and in the mystics, lie behind the disparagement of mind, and render such disparagement intelligible. Mind can be exalted, so it would seem, only if the unspiritual in it remains undetected, or, if discovered, becomes sublimated.

The attempt to sublimate what is unspiritual in mind or con-

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 67.

² *Idealism and the Modern Age*, pp. 124, 125.

sciousness, thus making it possible to define in its name both existence and value, is a feat for which the post-Kantian idealists, with the notable exception of Schopenhauer, have a special claim to distinction. Unmindful of the cautious though inarticulate realism of Kant, his followers convert an idealism exclusively epistemological into an idealism which is predominantly ontological. Kant's teaching that the facts of experience are subject to the behest of mind and for that very reason permit no incursion into their inner and metaphysical nature, is for his successors, as we shall see, productive of a quite different result. The metaphysical situation is for Kant problematic just because the epistemological is so luminous. Unknowable for him is the *spiritual* character of the world precisely because its phenomenal nature is knowable in *mental* terms. For Kant to know means to 'phenomenalize,' *i.e.*, to know means to effect a certain transformation or transfiguration of reality. Knowledge introduces into reality elements which are foreign to it, elements that have to do with its structure, its order, its sequence, its regularity, its uniformity, its general lawfulness. What we know is thus ontologically tainted, as it were, by means of those forms, concepts, categories, or ideas in terms of which things that enjoy an existence undisturbed by them are translated and transmuted. Whether the real world is or is not subject to the imperious demands of spirituality, whether it is or is not in accord with our deepest ideals and values, the nature of knowledge itself prevents us from ascertaining. Paradoxically enough, the tools or instruments of knowledge — our 'ideas' — changing whatever they touch or appropriate, are creative of a new, but phenomenal, world which for ever insinuates itself between us and the real nature of the universe, so that for us as knowers and discoverers it must always remain problematic whether reality is friendly or whether it is inimical to our 'ideals.' Intelligence, in the very act of constructing into coherent and orderly structures the given elements of experience, erects an impenetrable screen before the real or inner nature of things. Strange as it may sound to say it, it is our ideas which separate us from theoretical certitude concerning our ideals. To put it in a drastic form: it is our

mind with its categories which veils from our purview the spiritual world. And whenever the mind endeavors to lift the veil, as it is perforce destined to do, it discovers, not the ideals which it theoretically seeks, not the values which it intellectually craves, but itself in a hopeless maze of contradictions, in an inextricable net of antinomies. For Kant, therefore, the destiny of reason is a tragic destiny. It seeks to transcend what it is never able to transcend. It perpetually labors to pass beyond its mental confines to a region of spiritual truths only thereby to renew the discovery of its inevitable and impassable limits. Concretely and in the language of Kant, God, freedom and immortality — the names and symbols for the deepest of human values — are objects which reason is forced perpetually to seek and which it is cozened continually to renounce. We are bidden by Kant to witness perhaps the greatest tragedy imaginable, the tragedy of a deep and never-ending struggle of mind with its own antinomies in its endeavor to transcend the positive region of ideas and to reach the problematic sphere of ideals; problematic, of course, from the point of view of demonstrable knowledge.

But this tragedy may be read in either of two ways. It may mean, what indeed it means to Schopenhauer, that we have here to do with a fundamental and ultimate diremption between existence and value, an absolute and irreducible discord between mind and spirituality. Unintelligible is the incompatibility between the region of ideas and the realm of ideals, — it simply passes understanding. And it is this irrational fissure between our ideas and our ideals which lends to Schopenhauer's pessimism its deepest aspect. The other rendering of the tragic struggle of mind with its own discrepancies and dissensions, the one made familiar by the rest of the post-Kantians, consists in boldly identifying spirituality with mind incessantly divided against itself, and rationality with consciousness for ever torn asunder by anguish and misery, error and sin, folly and caprice, negation and contradiction. By sublimating all that appears unspiritual in consciousness, mind and spirituality become ultimately co-extensive and co-eval. This sublimation, however, cannot be effected without viewing mind as a *whole* and as a *process*. As

a *whole* mind absorbs and assimilates all its unspiritual parts; as a *process* it transcends them and leaves them behind. Spirituality, according to these post-Kantian idealists, is nothing but this continual absorbing and transcending by mind of its own discrepant and rebellious parts. Where there is spiritual life, there is incessant struggle with refractory elements. Thus to view mind or consciousness is to view it as 'dialectical,' *i.e.*, as unfolding and expanding in accordance with an immanent and rhythmic law, a law, however, which resembles not a little a sword that is double-edged. For this law condemns as negative and irrational the parts taken in isolation; but justifies and vindicates them in relation to the whole. Professor Hoernlé, a recent advocate of traditional idealism, has worded this 'double-edged' dialectical principle with fair accuracy in a passage that is worth quoting. "From this principle," he says, discussing the problem of the self, "flows the spiritual structure of all self-consciousness. It implies both identity and difference of 'self' and 'world.' As a part, the self is distinguishable, not from, but within, the whole, and the whole so far confronts the self as an overwhelming, and in some moods as a foreign or hostile 'Other.' But the part also belongs to the whole, and the life of the whole pulses in the part; and this sense of being at one with, or at home in, the universe is the complementary oscillation in the experience of being a self, and, as such, an individual focus of the universe."¹ This 'dialectical relation' of whole and part holds true, not only of self and not-self, but of all things, since, according to the presupposition of all post-Kantians, mind or consciousness is their common and fundamental basis. It is precisely this universal mental basis of all things which guarantees their spiritual career. Nothing mental, however irrational and diabolical, is sufficiently opaque to resist the ubiquitous process of dialectical sublimation. In Hegel's world, for instance, unreasonable facts are needed, as Royce remarks, "in order to give to Hegel's form of the reasonable principle its opportunity to triumph through its own activity. . . . From Hegel's point of view, it is quite reasonable that particular instances of the irrational should be

¹ *Studies in Contemporary Metaphysics*, pp. 292, 293.

present.”¹ Universal sublimation of all that is unreasonable and unspiritual in consciousness is vouchsafed by a new logic, according to which things partake at once of identity and difference. As a part, adapting Professor Hoernlé’s phraseology, the irrational is distinguishable, not from, but within, the whole of the spiritual reality; but the life of the spirit throbs equally in all parts, and is thus their identity, unity, and continuity. Here we have the ultimate harmony of mind and spirituality. No wonder, then, that mind or consciousness is for the post-Kantians something which denotes at once existence and value. No wonder Hegel could, in all philosophic sincerity, find it possible to make the famous assertion that “what is real, is rational” and “what is rational is real”; reality, in this case, meaning whatever partakes of the nature of mind, and its rationality consisting in yielding to a universal process of sublimation.

Farther than Hegel it would seem impossible to go in the apotheosis of mind. What is in Berkeley a stark assumption, *i.e.*, the equivalence of mind and spirituality, is, in Hegel’s philosophy, a matter of rigid and sustained proof. No one, of course, could be blind to the enormous difference, in complexity as well as in profundity, between Berkeley’s mental atomism and Hegel’s spiritual absolutism. Yet in both may not the same fundamental difficulty be detected? Just as Berkeley, it may be urged, in substituting mind for matter as the only substance of things, has, in the last analysis, removed from materialism its name alone, leaving the world otherwise unaltered, so Hegel, it may likewise be contended, in identifying reality with an Absolute Spirit, has, after all is said and done, effected no more than a verbal change. As for Hegel’s account of things in terms of an Absolute, from the point of view of which whatever happens is seen to be indispensable to make the universe as spiritual as it possibly could be, what is it ultimately but a defense of the tautological assertion that ‘whatever is, is,’ and a warrant for the noxious belief that ‘whatever is, is right?’ Of Hegel’s idealism Mr. Santayana has said, perhaps too harshly but not altogether unjustly, that it “is simply contempt for all ideals,

¹ *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, p. 224.

and a hearty adoration of things as they are.”¹ This is an extravagant statement and does not, of course, tell the whole story. Hegel was not merely the ideological apologist for the established order of things. His dialectical analysis of life involves a merciless criticism of all that is, however seemingly fixed and permanent. Everything, according to his philosophy, is unstable, and, from a temporal point of view, doomed to be fugitive. The emphasis upon the change and evanescence of things is a predilection which suggests the ‘radical’ rather than the ‘conservative.’ But this is only one edge of the dialectical sword. There is another. Viewed logically and timelessly, everything, however ephemeral, discloses itself as a necessary part of a rational whole. This means, if it means anything, a vindication, on a *priori* grounds, of any *status quo* in science, religion, art, politics, and morals; it means, more specifically, an apology for the social organizations, political institutions, economic conditions, religious creeds, æsthetic and literary tastes of any and every given epoch. In short, everything any nation or race or individual chances at any historical moment to bring to fruition must be regarded as inevitable and rational and good and right. Viewed thus, the criticism that Hegel’s idealism contains too ‘realistic’ an admixture is not without pertinency. It belongs to the pathos of Hegel’s idealism to permit “a hearty adoration of things as they are” and to encourage a conservatism of the blindest sort. Of any particular situation, event, or interest, Hegel’s account is not at all incongruous with the language of the crassest realism. His logic is a sort of *Reallogik*; just as his exaltation of the political state favors a notorious *Realpolitik*. We must perforce accept as given and inevitable and rational whatever we find or discover. The established order is always the right order. It is his metaphysical bias, however, which saves Hegel’s doctrine from a gross realism. It is, as in the case of Berkeley, the bias for mind or consciousness as such. Things are not accepted simply because they *are* given; they are accepted because they are given as mind, by mind, to mind. The spiritual function of things is deduced from their mental structure. Whatever is,

¹ *Winds of Doctrine*, p. 162.

is regarded by Hegel as fundamentally spiritual, for no other reason, it appears, than because whatever is, is interpreted by him as the ultimate expression of a conscious reality. This explains the inordinate optimism of Hegel in the face of the trials and tragedies of life which none better than he knew how to discern and articulate. It is difficult to avoid speaking of Hegel's philosophy as a 'Demonodicy'—a justification of the ways of the devil, as it were—so plentiful are in his 'rational' world pain and sorrow and sin and struggle and defeat. Is this statement so very impertinent? I think not. Hegel's existential judgments differ little from those of Schopenhauer: the tragedy of life and mind, drawn by Schopenhauer with such consummate literary skill, is painted by Hegel in colors no less somber, but suggesting nothing alas! of the pessimist's artistic genius. Nothing indeed could be more grim than the life of mind as unfolded in Hegel's *Phenomenology*. But for Hegel mind is what it could not be for Schopenhauer: the locus both of existence and value. And in the conviction of their ultimate harmony or coalescence consists the justification of metaphysical optimism. Thus the apotheosis of mind by Hegel has its initial impulse in the axiomatic assumption that only in mental terms can spirituality be defined. The result is an existential account of the universe, and a verdict concerning its worth, in terms of the same fundamental bias. It is this bias which aids us in understanding (what otherwise seems the most baffling thing in all philosophy), how purely existential judgments parade with startling suddenness as spiritual judgments, and *vice versa*, how judgments of value assume before our very eyes existential rank. And herein lies the significance of Hegel's philosophy: it is an attempt on a grand scale—perhaps the grandest—to lodge in mind or consciousness alone all reality and all value.

Whether Hegel has succeeded well or ill in such a vast undertaking is something that need not concern us here. The only point having claim upon our attention for the present is the motive which lies behind his bias for consciousness. This motive has to do with the search for a single source from the point of view of which existential judgments will be seen to coalesce with judgments

of value. The conviction that mind alone is such a source is at the root of Hegel's complicated system; the apotheosis of mind is its soul and leaven. There is for Hegel but one form or category of existence which is identical with an absolute form or category of value, discoverable in the region of consciousness, and ultimately fusing with it. The universe cannot be envisaged other than as mind without robbing it at one stroke of both its stuff and substance and its meaning and worth. The whole Hegelian edifice rests upon the presupposition that consciousness and spirituality are in the last analysis one and indivisible. This presupposition, however, may be rejected. Schopenhauer's manner of challenging it, by viewing mind and spirituality as fundamentally antagonistic, has already been noted. But there is yet another way. It consists in the refusal to deny spiritual import to a world amenable to description in non-mental terms. For spirituality is a concept of value, capable of union with or severance from any existential judgment. The material texture, 'material' in the Aristotelian sense, of which the world is regarded as being woven, is as such spiritually neutral. No particular content needs to preclude the possibility of its being spiritually plastic. May not from any stuff spiritual significance be extracted, provided it shows itself in accord with certain human needs and interests and values?

I shall hazard a paradox in taking as an illustration an extreme case—the case of metaphysical materialism. Materialism is commonly interpreted as the uncompromising foe of all that is spiritual. That it is theoretically destructive of certain cherished values is true enough. The description of the world in terms of one homogeneous physical substance, of which all things are but different configurations, resulting from the mechanical and regular motion of its ultimate particles, is this not, one may well ask, tantamount to a denial of 'God, freedom, and immortality'? Yes, so it must be replied, if these concepts are viewed in the light of traditional theology and idealistic metaphysics; and in so far as all spiritual values are lodged in them, and in them alone, materialism must indeed be condemned as spiritually barren. Nevertheless, materialism is not without spiritual predilec-

tions of its own. Not purely cognitive are the motives for embracing a materialistic view of things. Materialism, too, is the generalized response to an inner bias. The bias for matter has its roots in certain ideals and values no less spiritual than those that inspire the bias for mind. Strange as it may sound to say it, some of the motives for materialism are spiritual motives. To be sure, the zealous partisans of doctrines opposed to materialism see in it nothing but negation and disintegration. Before their very eyes the universe seems to crumble into dust. They shudder to think of it as an endless dance of atoms, a senseless drift of particles. Yet the needs which materialism satisfies are human needs. One of them is bound up with what William James calls the "sentiment of rationality." "What is the task which philosophers set themselves to perform," asks James, "and why do they philosophize at all"? And he replies: "They desire to attain a conception of the frame of things which shall on the whole be more rational than that somewhat chaotic view which everyone by nature carries about with him under his hat."¹ In all the deeper forms of materialism or naturalism, from Lucretius to Santayana, lies embedded this spiritual sentiment of rationality. Not without conviction is a materialistic theory accepted by its votaries—not, in fact, without *the* conviction—that it alone succeeds in satisfying the human passion for intelligibility. From this point of view, materialism is one of the many philosophic adventures engaged in the spiritual struggle with a refractory world. It is this intellectual battle with a stubborn universe which imparts to every philosophy, whatever its theoretical result, a spiritual meaning and dignity. That materialism does not satisfy the rational demands of all men, simply shows that such demands are various, tangled and incongruous with motives other than rational. How else explain the everlasting contest of metaphysical ideas? But the cry of the human passion for rationality is heard in every philosophy. Materialism is no exception. Matter is capable of sublimation as much as is mind. Matter, too, may be envisaged as the solver of our riddles. The assertion that there is in the world nothing

¹ *The Will to Believe*, p. 63.

but matter in motion is a judgment not merely existential. In those who uphold it, as, for instance, in Lucretius, it easily becomes converted into a judgment of value. For matter is contemplated as something eternal, indestructible, ubiquitous. As such it not only solves our problems but also exalts our minds. It banishes from our hearts fear and superstition. It drives away doubt and perplexity. It engenders a deep humility and a wise resignation. Serenity and a calm joy, too, may follow from the contemplation of matter as all pervading. There is a pleasure, as James puts it, in finding that a chaos of facts is the expression of a single underlying fact. It is "like the relief of the musician at resolving a confused mass of sound into melodic or harmonic order."¹ And the sublimity of an infinite substance, the fertile essence of countless worlds, may it not give rise to feelings akin to religious awe and reverence? There is thus no impropriety in speaking of the spiritual implications of materialism. In this connection, Guyau's significant remarks on materialism may here be cited. "Materialism," he says, "is advocated in the name of positive science; but it, not less than idealism, belongs really to the poetry of metaphysics; its poetry is recorded simply in terms of atoms and motion, instead of in terms of the elements of consciousness. . . . Materialism is in some sort a tissue of metaphor in which scientific terms lose their scientific signification, and gain a metaphysical signification in its stead, transferred, as they are, to a domain that lies beyond the range of experience. . . . And finally, materialism, properly so called, has been invaded by a notion which has been at all times peculiarly adapted to satisfy the metaphysical and religious aspirations of mankind, the notion of infinity."²

Not so much by its notion of infinity, as Guyau holds, does materialism tend to take on a spiritual coloring, but rather, it seems to me, by its conception of unity. In its quest for unity — if but a casual observation may here be made on a profound analogy — materialism bears not a little resemblance to mysticism. Both the mystic and the materialist refuse to identify the real

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

² *The Non-Religion of the Future*. English translation, pp. 490 and 491.

world with the multiplicity of heterogeneous things confusedly impinging upon our ordinary experience. Of a pluralistic universe they do not conceive. Of individual variety, irreducible diversity, ultimate complexity—categories both existential and spiritual which inspire the philosophies of thinkers as widely divergent as William James is from Leibniz, or Nietzsche from Herbart—of ‘pluralistic’ principles, in short, mystics and materialists evince no appreciation. A unity there must be, so they profoundly believe, behind and beyond the superficial medley and flow of things. And this unity—of this mystics and materialists are equally convinced—must be homogeneous in essence, immutable in substance. All things, multiple and diverse though they appear to sense and imagination, must be viewed, as in Swinburne’s “Hertha,” as partaking of an unchanging identity. The Many pass, the One remains. All is One, whether named Force, Energy, Life, or the Nameless. Alike in mysticism and materialism, there is no compromise with the ‘Many.’ The problem of consciousness which would seem to offer serious obstacles to such a radical monism is for the mystic and the materialist not at all insuperable. Consciousness must be made to fuse with the One. Such fusion may be accomplished in a variety of ways. It may, in materialism, take the form of extending the meaning of consciousness, as in Haeckel’s panpsychism, so as to include all so-called ‘unconscious’ manifestations; or it may take the form of denying to consciousness any attributes not possessed by physical energy. In any case, ordinary consciousness must be so transformed that it will cease to be a menace to materialistic monism. Of such ‘transformation’ of ordinary consciousness consists the fascinating lore of mysticism. Consciousness must be robbed of its power to disturb the permanent stillness and harmony of the One. The One—when the impediments are removed which the ordinary consciousness puts in the way to its discovery—either turns out to be filled with a new and esoteric type of consciousness, such as characterizes the ecstatic mystic vision, or, from the non-mystic point of view, is possessed of no consciousness at all. Thus the method of the mystic is like the method of the materialist. To preserve the identity, unity, and

homogeneity of the real universe, the meaning of consciousness must undergo a radical change so as to be capable of being All or Nothing. Irrespective, therefore, of differences in specific tenets, in their allegiance to an uncompromising monism, to the extent of doing violence to the facts of consciousness, mysticism and materialism exhibit a remarkable affinity. Protean as are the forms of monism, they all seem to be "bound each to each by natural piety." The same 'theory of values,' as it were, appears, so it may be suggested in passing, to be their common parent. It is the theory which accords preference to uniformity and simplicity over diversity and complexity. The postulate that a universe identical in substance or essence is more satisfying, intellectually or emotionally, than a universe which is heterogeneous, seems to be at the heart of every monistic view that takes itself seriously. Materialism, then, despite its peculiar existential judgments about the 'stuff' of the world, shares with speculative or religious mysticism a predilection for those values that center around the notions of uniformity, identity, simplicity, homogeneity, and above all, unity. This superficial suggestion of a possible analogy between materialism and mysticism, a subject meriting more than parenthetical mention, is here inserted to emphasize once more the contention that a materialistic metaphysics, in spite of its rejection of mind or consciousness as ultimate categories, need not necessarily be considered refractory in responding to certain spiritual interests.

I confess to having taken an extreme instance to illustrate the view that the universe need not be destitute of spiritual characters because its 'stuff' may be described in non-mental terms. It is the counterpart of the doctrine, such as Schopenhauer's, which withholds from the world spiritual qualities, although mind must be regarded as its substance and basis. Less paradoxical and more familiar an illustration is the case of Spinoza. For it is Spinoza who furnishes the classic vindication of the view that spiritual values are not excluded from a universe in which mind is but one manifestation or attribute among an infinite number. Mind for Spinoza is but a fragment or an incident in the total context of infinite possibilities. Spinoza, it is fair

to say, seems to be wanting in bias for mind as well as in bias for matter, the two being conceived by him, as everyone knows, as absolutely parallel to each other and to countless other, to us unfamiliar, manifestations of the same infinite universe. If there is a Spinozistic bias, it is rather a bias for 'being' as such. The universe as a whole, so Spinoza teaches,—under whatever attributes or modes it may appear to us, however tangled and sordid it may reveal itself to our defective and distracted vision,—Being in its entirety, in all its expanse and with all its details, must be appraised as 'spiritual,' *i.e.*, as rational, significant, full of dignity and sublimity, worthy of our reverence and love, commensurate indeed with the deepest spiritual concept of human coinage—God. Whatever is, is divine; in the discovery of this truth lies for Spinoza our sole spiritual vocation. But the assertion that the total context of Being is identical with God, this identity constituting the spiritual nature of the universe, means for Spinoza the complete abandonment of the ego-centric and the anthro-po-centric points of view. As a philosophy radically 'de-o-centric' it disparages as relative all that is merely human. The spirituality of the universe does not consist for Spinoza in its plasticity to ideas and ideals derived from human mind or consciousness; its spirituality consists in having a locus and a range altogether beyond the ken of man's inner life. Not by analogy with human experience is the universe rendered intelligible,—that way lie vanity and conceit. In the surrender of such vain and inordinate ambition Spinoza finds the measure of man's spiritual stature. Such surrender confers upon man the only spirituality he is capable of attaining. This is the meaning of Spinoza's famous saying that he who truly loves God cannot wish that God should love him in return. It would degrade God to conceive of him as engrossed in that which is peculiar to man, a mere incident in the wealth of his infinite being. It exalts man, however, to forsake his own arrogance and impertinence and to contemplate the universe under the form of eternity, *i.e.*, under the form of a divine destiny, for Spinoza synonymous with a non-human destiny. This involves the relinquishment of any attempt to envisage God in terms of mind, or consciousness, or

experience, or personality, or any other category drawn from but one of his infinite attributes. *Omnis determinatio est negatio*. Here we have a distinctly spiritual view of the universe in which mind has no vested interests. To reach the 'decentric' view, the 'ideo-centric' view must be completely left behind.

All these historical illustrations disclose the conflict of human motives and attitudes in regard to the place of mind or consciousness in the total nature of things. The apotheosis of mind, latent or overt in most forms of modern idealism, is open to challenge by a variety of speculative possibilities. On the one hand, mind may be acknowledged to be the source and the basis of our existential judgments, but for this very reason one may consider problematic or nugatory our spiritual judgments or our judgments of value. An idealistic analysis of things may yield a theoretical agnosticism, such as Kant's, concerning our ideal values and interests, or it may, *à la* Schopenhauer, culminate in a pessimistic view of our spiritual destiny. On the other hand, the complete banishment of spirituality is not necessarily involved in the rejection of mind as an ultimate category or in relegating it to a mere incident in an infinite universe. We have seen reasons for vindicating judgments of value on a basis naturalistic or Spinozistic. The possibility of insulating spirituality from mind and mind from spirituality, exemplified sufficiently in the history of thought, will always constitute the gravamen of the charge against those forms of idealism which seek in mind, and in mind alone, the locus of both our existential judgments and our judgments of value.

The inferences to be drawn from the foregoing analysis, reserved for a discussion more extended than the present, might in the end lead to the question whether philosophic generalizations are not after all judgments of value in disguise, even where the avowed purpose is to render valid judgments of an existential nature. In one sentence, which I shall venture to translate freely, Simmel suggests the thought that "the timeless validity of philosophic doctrines does not lie in the truth they propound concerning objective reality, but rather in the genuineness and depth with which their objective assertions, often erroneous, ex-

press an inner attitude of mind towards the universe, and reveal, not the real nature of things, but rather by a circuitous route through them, the real nature of souls.”¹ Philosophy, so an enlightened humanism of Simmel’s type would express it, is a human response to things and not their cosmic transcript. Its function is not, if facetiousness be permitted, to furnish us with the latest absolute news from an infinite cosmos. In so far as it is concerned with existential judgments, philosophy can lay claim to no special privileges not enjoyed by science. Philosophic knowledge is not occult; philosophy, too, must depend for an intelligent insight into the nature of things upon observation, experiment, hypothesis, and verification. Where, as in philosophy, existential judgments are so much vaster than they are in science, the principle of scepticism, so much lauded by a noted geologist as a scientific principle, should, one would suppose, be applied with the utmost rigor. “The maxim that to err is human,” says Professor A. C. Lawson, “has become a very real and controlling doctrine among scientific men. They have, by the rigor of their methods of investigating hypotheses, become so familiar with error of observation and of judgment, that, in dealing with any new statement, whether of fact or of hypothesis, the first and safest assumption they make is, that it is partially erroneous. This is in fact the commonest of all scientific hypotheses, and the one which is most frequently confirmed. This scepticism is one of the surest symptoms of a healthy, vigorous mind. It is a happy approach to mental poise, in contrast to child-like credulity on the one hand and dogmatic denial on the other.”² Yet, no such principle of scepticism, advocated by the man of science, is ever very much in evidence among philosophers. Philosophers hesitate little in reducing the entire universe to vast generalizations not easily tested. They do not shrink from epitomising under a single phrase or formula the cosmic fate of things. Thus we are told that all is mind or all is matter, all is unity or all is plurality, all is permanence or all is change, all is this or all is that. What worth, one may ask, have such sweep-

¹ *Kant*, p. 2.

² “The Spirit of Science” in *University of California Chronicle*, Vol. XXII, No. 2, p. 13.

ing generalizations? Are they sustained by observation and experiment as are the generalizations of science? The difficulty of reaching final certitude concerning any circumscribed sphere of facts, to which science limits itself, does this not render all the more dubious any ascertainable and exact knowledge of the boundless regions of philosophic research? In truth, so it must be candidly admitted, were the fruits of philosophy merely judgments of existential import, the harvest would be far from encouraging. But if Simmel is right in holding that philosophic assertions about the nature of things reveal but the inner dispositions of human attitudes towards them; or, putting the matter in my own way, if the task of philosophy is one which through existential judgments discloses, records, and interprets our judgments of value, then the sweeping assertions of philosophy are not to be viewed as hypotheses to be empirically verified or discredited. They are, as this fragmentary analysis of the idealistic apotheosis of mind has suggested, rather expressions of conflicting motives and needs, having their root in human nature and finding their concrete embodiment in human history. The incessant strife of rival theories in philosophy is a tragic struggle, not of competing scientific hypotheses, but of incompatible passions and values. The conflicts of philosophy are in the last analysis the conflicts of human civilization writ large. But all this forms the subject matter of another and larger essay.

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